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ZULEIMA;
A TALE OF PERSIA;
CAIN;
ST. PAUL AT MALTA,
WITH
OTHER POEMS.

BY
HENRY INGRAM,

Author of "The Flower of Wye," and "Matilda, a Tale of the Crusades."

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TO MY BOOK.

Go FORTH, my book ! Tho' simple be thy lay,
Go forth. No quaint affected pomp is thine,
Mocking chaste Nature's rules, at whose lov'd shrine
Thou ever wert a wooer. Why delay
The parting moment ? shrink'st thou to survey
From the World's shadowy brink, the depths below,
Strange, dark, and terrible ? O, fearless go.
What tho' the Age with taste diseas'd require
Food of high relish,—tho' unhallow'd fire
Steal thro' the land insidious, fear not thou !
'Twill not be ever thus : her sainted brow
Simplicity shall lift once more ; Desire
Shall to his bosom fold the soft-eyed guest,
No longer range, or feel one wish unblest.

Go then, my book ! The awaken'd World, ere long,
Like a young truant from his Mother's arms
Parted awhile, shall own sweet Nature's charms,
And Truth and Virtue vindicate the song.

CONTENTS.



	PAGE
ZULEIMA.—PART THE FIRST	1
ZULEIMA.—PART THE SECOND	41
CAIN	67
ST. PAUL AT MALTA	87

MINOR POEMS.

THE DECISION	103
THE FALSE ONE	107
FONTENELLE	110
THE PROSPECT	112
OSSIANIC FRAGMENTS	119
THE FATHER TO HIS CHILD	123
THE DYING EMPEROR ADRIAN'S ADDRESS TO HIS SOUL	128
EVENING	129

WOMAN.

O'ER the deep gloom of sublunary things,
How sweet the radiance lovely Woman flings !
Smiling thro' tears, like Heaven's ærial bow,
She kindles hope within the haunts of woe.
Tho' weak and gentle, emblem of repose,
The virgin-Wonder into being rose,
Oft shrinking from herself, with startled look,
As Zephyr's breath her golden tresses shook ;
How firm, how resolute, her alter'd form
To brave, at Nature's call, life's varied storm,
Baring her sacred bosom to the blow,
To shield the lov'd one from impending woe !
Yes, from the cradle to life's awful close,
No pause, no change, her pure devotion knows.

E'en o'er the grave with brighter flame it burns,
As all the endearing past to thought returns.
Deep in her heart each word, each look, she shrines,
And, but with life, the hallow'd dream resigns.

ZULEIMA,

A TALE OF PERSIA.

In Two Parts.



THE Events, on which the following tale is founded, are Historic facts, drawn from the annals of Persia. The catastrophe is, however, altered, without impairing the interest of the story, which is, in the original, a continued series of unmingled woe.

ZULEIMA.

Part the First.

Z U L E I M A.



SHE sat within her bow'r. The laughing Hours
That languish'd in the burning clasp of Noon,
Now woo'd sweet Eve that with elastic step
Sprang at the call, from dewy diadem
Shaking rich pearly tears o'er shrub and flower,
Such as in Eastern climes, with gorgeous glow,
Sham'd the pale children of a colder sky.
'Twas Love's own calm, thro' Nature's wide expanse
Felt, yet unseen ; in dreamy stillness all
Save the wild beatings of the heart that hop'd

Its triumph near. She sat within her bow'r
In all the dazzling splendour of a bride
Of Persia's royal race. Her heart's young dream
Was crown'd that morn with sweet reality.
Why then the brow of gloom, the restless eye,
Oft as the breeze, in amorous pastime, shook
The tresses of her Moon-lit canopy?
'Twas not the lov'd one's step, the lov'd one's voice!
'Why com'st thou not, Lord of each fev'rish pulse,
Whose ev'ry throb is thine? She longs to pour
Her passionate feelings in thy patient ear,
And murmur all her wishes on thy breast.

From yon proud balcony whose column'd length
Is sweetly mirror'd in the wave beneath,
The spell-bound Ganem bends. How beautiful
Sleeps the calm Moonlight o'er a silent world,

When its rude din is hush'd, and the bright stars
Peep, like pure Spirits, from their azure bow'rs
To list the night-bird's music ! Ganem's heart
Felt not the thrilling magic—wild and high
Throbb'd ev'ry restless pulse. One spot alone
Chain'd his rapt gaze, where fairy gardens shrin'd
All that rich Art, by zoneless Nature woo'd
To deck her simple charms, could boast of rare
And wonderful : where living fountains pour'd
Their silv'ry songs, and flow'rs of ev'ry hue
Sigh'd their sweet odours to the wanton air.
Meet haunt for Persia's King, whose marble halls
Peer'd in long vista midst the emerald shade,
Their white shafts glist'ning in the pensive beam.
O, well he knew that she, his Virgin bride,
Mourn'd in those royal bowers their wayward fate,
Counting the ling'ring moments till they met.
Why meet they not ? A ban is on the wish,

So stern, so terrible, that e'en Desire
Shrank at the appalling thought!

O'er Persia's realm
Now Abbas reign'd. With the proud name of "Great,"
A grateful kingdom wreath'd the Monarch's fame.
Once in the battle-front his white steed fell,—
The death-stroke hover'd o'er him—thro' the ranks
Spread wild'ring fear. Sudden an unknown arm
Stay'd the wild rout. Again the youthful King,
As erst Antæus from his mother earth
Springing with added pow'rs, tower'd in the van,
Bearing with tenfold fierceness on his foes,
That back recoil'd and mourn'd with impotent rage
Their baffled hopes. Erect in youthful grace,
As Ganem stood amid the assembled Chiefs,
"Modest as brave," the admiring Monarch cried,

“I owe thee life; the glorious struggle won
Is due to thee—thy King shall pay the debt.”
Thick as the leaves by autumn’s eddies strewn,
Round Ganem’s path were royal favours show’r’d.
’Twas like a dream—each tow’ring step was gain’d,
Till in the Vizier’s robes array’d he stood.
Envy, with scowling look and venom’d heart,
Scann’d ev’ry act, but barb’d the shaft in vain.

• His high estate, in delegated trust
For others’ weal, he meekly seem’d to hold,
Valiant as wise. Aw’d by his lightning march
Rebellion knelt dismay’d, and rescued crowds
With unbought blessings hung upon his path.
Let Eastern annals tell how smiling Peace,
The battle-clarion hush’d, o’er Persia’s vales
Her dove-like pinions wav’d.—’Twas Ganem’s work,
Fruit of his honest zeal. Round Abbas’ throne,
When all was pomp and vassal Princes bow’d,
The observ’d of all was Ganem—round his brow

Cluster'd rich raven curls, and wonder grew
Gazing his faultless form. He seem'd like one
More meet to revel in a lady's bow'r,
Than wield a mighty Empire's destinies.

As yet, tho' Beauty all her wiles display'd,
He knew not love. It chanc'd as in the shade,
On proud designs intent, he mus'd apart,
A Vision crossed his path, for such he deem'd
The Seraph shape that o'er his musing broke
With soundless feet. It seem'd to court his gaze,
And slowly gliding by, half drew aside
Its snowy veil, and vanish'd. Not in vain
That hasty glimpse. 'Twas she! Zuleima's self,
The Sister of his King! she on whose smile
Devoted myriads hung, her ev'ry wish
To catch ere scarcely breath'd. Why thus alone,
Reft of her wonted state? As rapt he stood,

A flow'ry wreath dropt sudden at his feet.

O could he doubt? its silent eloquence

The mystic emblem pour'd, and o'er his heart

A gush of rapture swept. Was it to him

The thrilling Herald came, whose mingled bloom

Breath'd love's warm sighs, which kings had woo'd in

vain?

A new Existence dawn'd upon his soul—

Nature more beauteous smil'd. Thou wert the cause,

Enchanting Love! thy spell was on his heart,

Flinging its own fair heav'n on all things round.

O that the sweetest drop Life's chalice holds

Should cheat the trusting hope!

O'er Persia's fields.

Sudden fierce desert Hordes, to fame unknown,

Swept torrent-like, and from her rosy dream

Scar'd gentle Peace. On, on, the Invaders roll'd,
Giant in limb and size. "O well I read,
Ganem," his Sov'reign cried, "thy fiery glance.
Again thy Country claims thee—to her aid
Like the death-angel sweep. That duty done,
Yet brighter honours wait thee." From the throne
The enthusiast Ganem turn'd. "Ere yet thou goest,
If Woman's gifts, as Minstrel legends say,
Charm danger from the brave, midst fiercest war
Be this thy safeguard, and thy motto, 'Hope.'"
A scarf, Love's roseate hue, the royal Maid
Flung o'er him as he knelt. Her glance convey'd
Unutterable things. O 'twas an age
In one brief moment! Lovers best can tell
The richness of a look, whose thrilling spell
Oft breathes a tale too eloquent for speech.

Amid the shock of hosts, that parting look
To more than mortal daring nerv'd his arm.
Like Hope's sweet star, it hung around his path,
Pointing the proud reward to vict'ry due.

They come, They come! the City's crowded streets
Echo with joyous throngs that rush amain
Thro' the wide gates, or line the trembling wall.
They come, the crown'd with vict'ry! far and wide
Dances the glorious beam on burnish'd arms
Winding in sinuous tide. Triumphant songs
Are rich with Ganem's name, and flow'rs are strewn,
And rapt'rous greetings burst from gladden'd hearts.
O sweetest music to the Patriot's ear,
When a lov'd Country's hallow'd blessings crown
His proud deservings! Ganem's high-wrought soul
The mighty influence own'd, but sighing felt
One voice alone, tho' in soft whispers breath'd,

Would wake a deeper thrill. That rosy scarf,
Zuleima's gift, companion of his toils,
Round which the battle-storm innocuous swept,
Still grac'd his manly form, and haply she,
As yet unseen, with throbbing bosom mark'd
How dear the cherish'd boon! From her lone bow'r
She heard the onward shouts : with buoyant step
She reach'd the airy balcony, and thence
Far as the eye could reach, in one dense mass
The living Ocean roll'd. O what can 'scape
Love's searching gaze! 'twas he—her own lov'd gift
Hung glitt'ring o'er his breast—a gush of joy
Swell'd at her heart—she wav'd her snowy arms,
And conscious blushes crimson'd o'er her cheek.

“Ganem!” his Sov'reign said, “from public gaze
Awhile retir'd, to gratitude and thee
Be still my vows renew'd. Well hast thou earn'd

That wild applause, that like the Ocean-flood
Yet lingers on the ear. If wealth, if pow'r
Charm thy aspiring soul, e'en to excess
I'll crown thy ev'ry wish. But such methinks
Are the cold longings of maturer years,
Of calculating Age. Youth's buoyant pulse
Pants for that dearer bliss which heart to heart
In sweet communion link'd, alone can give.
Such lives in Woman's smile. How eloquent
Thy varying cheek! I read its language well—
'Tis Nature's pow'rful voice that mocks restraint.
Ganem! embosom'd in these fairy bow'rs
Blooms a lone flow'r, proud Nature's masterpiece :
Yes, when I name Zuleima, thou wilt own
How weak the pomp of words to reach her praise.
My throne, my bed, the wondrous Maid had shar'd,
But kindred ties forbad. Thrice blest is he,
The chosen of her heart. Tho' mighty Kings
Have spread the wealth of Empires at her feet,

Its virgin pulse is thine, and thine alone.
Thy King confirms her choice." Was it a dream
Rich with delicious hopes too bright to last ?
He fell at Abbas' feet. He would have pour'd
From grateful lips the lavish flood of joy
Wild swelling at his breast. The royal brow
Sudden gloom'd awful import. "Yet awhile
Pause, noble Youth ! haply the dazzling boon
Is shackled with conditions, which e'en thou
Wilt spurn indignant." Could it be ? could aught
Of pain or penance in this world of woe
Balance the thrilling joys her love would give ?
"Ganem ! bethink thee of thy eagle flight
From life's chill shades to the proud sunny glare
Of royal pomp. Yes, thou must own, thy King
Has with no niggard hand thy merits crown'd.
Now mark the terms, and waver while thou may'st,
On which Zuleima's thine. A husband's right
Thou ne'er must claim, nor with a lover's warmth

Approach thy Virgin bride. O! she has charms
Worthy thy King alone, and yet to him
For ever clos'd. That heav'n denied to me
Shalt thou enjoy, and Ali's godlike race
Be mix'd with vulgar taint? If still resolv'd,
Thou waverest not, thy promise thou must pledge,
(Thy oath I ask not, thou art Honour's self,)
To heed the warning well. That promise broke
Will rouse a fearful doom—thee and thy race
The exterminating sword shall whelm at once—
While She, lost wretch! but let me draw the veil
O'er horrors yet unknown. The caution giv'n
Heed well, nor rashly close thy last resolve."

When Reason rules, calm as the Summer main
A settled Sunshine sleeps upon the soul.
But when the Passions rush with furious sweep,
'Tis chaos all, and midst the howling storm

She lifts her voice in vain. In Ganem's breast
Nestled insidious Love, that called sweet Hope
To aid his tottering seat. The union prov'd
Resistless. Love in gentle whispers breath'd
Zuleima's glowing charms. Hope sooth'd his fears—
Haply his Sovereign's stern resolve might fade,
And all be well. Indignant Reason saw
The pois'nous chalice drain'd, and sigh'd farewell.

SHE sat within her bow'r, the Virgin bride—
The midnight Moon sail'd thro' the cloudless sky,
Yet he, the lov'd one, came not. At her feet
Cluster'd her dark-eyed Slaves, with song and tale
Striving in gen'rous rivalry to chase
Her brow's deep gloom. 'Twas now thro' Persia's
realm

One gorgeous festival, yet she alone,
The high-born bride, the idol of the day,

In lone seclusion pin'd away the hours
To love devote. On stole the ling'ring night—
O'er the hush'd lute the head unconscious droop'd,
And Duty yielded to oppressive sleep.
The wakeful Bride with sighs of envy gaz'd
Her slumb'ring train. They had no tyrant cares
Frighting capricious sleep that o'er them shed,
Unask'd, that boon to burning prayers denied.
“He comes not yet!” her beauteous brow grew dark,
“He cannot love like me.”—Strewn at her feet
Lay flow'rs of various hue. She rose, she cull'd
Those sweet Interpreters of thought, and wove
The magic wreath which Lovers best can read.
This done, she hung it on a rose-bush near,
Awoke her Slaves and glided sad away.

Whence is that Form whose rash, advent'rous foot

Profanes the royal shades, whose stealthy step
And cow'ring glance bespeak some midnight wretch,
On deed unholy bent? 'Tis he; but why,
Ganem, thy altered mien? Is such the look
Of buoyant hope impatient lovers wear,
By Beauty summon'd to the secret bow'r?
He starts, he hears quick-glancing feet; O breathe
Zuleima's name while yet she lingers near—
Love's slightest whisper will by love be heard.—
'Tis past, and all is still. He gains the bow'r,
How eloquent the scene! the scattered flow'rs
Bore print of recent foot. Here lay a lute,
There o'er a mimic throne at random flung
A shawl so wondrous rich, that none might own
Save One of royal race. He almost deem'd
His own lov'd Bride would from concealment start,
And spring to his embrace. His roving eye
Now caught the mystic wreath; its silent spell

Smote to his heart. "Morn comes"—it seem'd to say,

"But where art thou? like me thou canst not love—

Death has no terrors, if I die with thee."—

"And still I linger," burst from Ganem's lips—

"O! 'twas her parting foot that glided past,

Her weary watchings o'er!" He reek'd not now

That awful pledge whose dreadful forfeiture

Was writ in blood—like Maniac fierce he rush'd,

Threading each dewy maze. No answ'ring voice,

No distant footfall fed his burning hopes—

Morn glimmer'd faint, and prying eyes might ken

The death-devoted Wretch that dare profane

The royal bow'rs. "Lie there," he parting cried,

As o'er the wreath he hung his rosy scarf,

"Affection's sweetest pledge! Fond eyes shall gaze

And gleam with dewy rapture at thy sight—

O, when Night's shadowy veil shall fling once more

Its own delicious calm, yon conscious Moon

Shall own, nor threats, nor pow'r, nor death itself,
Can shake the proud omnipotence of Love."

Months rolled away—still shrin'd in Abbas' heart,
The youthful Vizier, with triumphant zeal
Upheld his country's name. All softer thoughts
Seem'd alien to his soul, whose stern delight
Was centred in ambition's stirring scenes.
E'en she, his Bride, whose unexampled love,
Whose dazzling witchery might well excuse
His deep idolatry, scarce homage won
More warm than Vassals to their tyrant liege
Reluctant pay. With keen, suspicious glance
The jealous King his cold indifference mark'd,
And wonder'd as he view'd. No rebel pulse,
No flushing cheek one inward struggle spoke.
What tho' the awful penalty was death,

Could he unmov'd his Virgin bride resign,
Nor murmur at his fate ? She, beauteous flow'r,
Seem'd at his chill neglect to droop and pine—
Her cheek grew pale—her brow was bow'd with
thought—
And her charm'd lute in idle slumber hung.

“ Zuleima ! ” starting at the call, she rais'd
Those eyes where late meridian lustre shone,
Now sunk in rayless gloom. O'er her the King
Hung mournfully. She met his stedfast gaze,
“ If right I read thy looks, thy Sister's fate
Speaks to thy soften'd soul. Yes, let me hence,
Where each familiar scene but feeds my grief.—
Methinks 'twould soothe my heart, at Mecca's shrine
Once more my long-neglected vows to pay.”
O ! could he gaze unmov'd the faded charms

Of one, too deeply lov'd. He knew, he felt,
Whence sprang her burning tears, her anxious suit.
He gave command to speed the train of pomp
Befitting royal birth. "I own," she sigh'd,
"Thy generous cares—but I have that within
That heeds not outward shew. If mine the choice,
Be few, companions of my pilgrim path,
And those alone for loyal trust approv'd."
'Twas done. As slow at early dawn the train
Wound thro' the city gates, o'er Abbas' soul
Fierce struggles swept. O, She was all to him—
From cares of state oft would he wearied turn
To woo those smiles, whose never-failing spell
Sooth'd him to peace, and o'er his chequer'd path
One ceaseless summer flung. Unwonted night
Seem'd gath'ring round him, and an icy chill
Smote to his alter'd heart. E'en yet the pow'r
Was his, those blissful moments to renew,

Ere lost for ever! Yes, one word from him
Had stay'd her parting step, had wreath'd her lip
In wonted smiles, and made their heav'n his own.

'Tis not in Courts, as Hist'ry's annals tell,
And sad Experience weeps the bitter truth,
That Faith delights to dwell. Her shrine is there,
And many a Worshipper lip-service pays,
Masking the rebel heart. Round Abbas' throne
Were those that long with jealous hatred fir'd
Mark'd Ganem's high estate. And still they smil'd,
While o'er their victim twin'd in deadly fold
The growing plot. They drank with greedy joy
The unnatural pledge which round the nuptial league
Its venom'd shackles flung. With lynx-eyed stealth
They watch'd his secret haunts, counting him more
Or less than Man, to nurse inviolate

That solemn pledge. His cold neglect of one
Whose charms might win the Hermit from his beads,
Who seem'd prepar'd to dare the worst, if love
Might meet its due reward, suspicion woke.
Not love alone, they deem'd enjoyment lurk'd
Beneath that careless mien. Whispers scarce breath'd,
As loth to hint the tale, stole faintly round,
Yet daily bolder grew. The appalling charge
When Abbas heard, his brow grew dark, his lips
Quiver'd—all eyes turn'd trembling to the throne—
“What, none that dare defend the slander'd Chief!
Would, Ganem, thou wert here! thy King alone
Flings back the foul reproach.—E'en, Mirza, thou,
Yes, thou art dumb. Speak! well I know thou shar'st
His inmost soul. I read thy look. I fear
'Tis ominous of ill.” At Abbas' feet
He fell. The Traitor trembled as he spoke.
“Hear, mighty King! let not my silence prove

Injurious to my friend. Dear as my own
Is Ganem's fame. Haply this day the news,
So long delay'd from Mecca's holy shrine,
May reach thy court. If Mirza dare advise,
Bid search the bearer, ere he parley hold
With the suspected Chief."—" 'Tis well advised—
Be thine the task—away, nor mock the trust."
Slow from the presence mov'd the sadden'd wretch,
Caught in his own deep toils. By Ganem lov'd,
Each secret movement of his soul he knew.
Hallow'd by time, his unexampled faith
'Twas treason e'en to doubt. Yet Mirza fell,
By mighty gold seduc'd. One shade alone,
The love of wealth, darkened his sunny fame.
'Twas on this hint the crafty plotters spake—
The dazzled Mirza caught the glitt'ring bait,
And peace and fame were wreck'd. As forth he went

Like Judas to betray, his trembling limbs
With horror shook—repentance came too late.

That eve the King, with a few Lords retir'd,
Mus'd o'er the wondrous past. Each flatt'ring hope
Was crush'd i' th' bud, for there were those around
That wither'd with a smile, and fann'd the flame
Themselves conspired to raise. With sinking heart
The Monarch heard. Anon the hard-clenched hand,
The mutter'd threat, his inward struggles spoke.
Sudden an eager voice, "E'en now, O King,
A jaded horseman nears the palace gates,
Demanding thee."—"Haste, bring him to our speech—
The proof's at hand, and Alla speed the right."
He came—how breathless was the pause—the fate
Of noble hearts on one short moment hung.
"What thou, good Hassan! Many a Moon has wan'd

Since last we met. Speak, ease my fears—how fares
Thy royal Mistress?”—“This, O King, will tell
Of health restor’d.” The important packet read,
“’Tis well,” rejoin’d the King. “Thus far my fears
Are all remov’d. Say, hast thou Mirza seen,
Thy Lord’s high-valu’d friend?”—“With none, O King,
Save thee, I’ve converse held.”—“Yet there is one,
Good Hassan, whose fond heart will leap to hear
Thy blessed news. But claims of import grave
Still urge him far away. Be ours to soothe
His keen suspense, and speed with arrow flight
Those treasur’d lines entrusted to thy care,
For Ganem’s eye alone.” A pause ensued—
“Great King! such trust is mine; but from my care
To part not yet, till Ganem’s self release
The sacred pledge. My vow of faith is sworn—
’Tis register’d above.” The Monarch shook
With agony. Abrupt he turn’d, where bent

The envious Crew, like greyhounds on the slip
To catch the signal word—at length 'twas giv'n
To seize, to search ; they sprang with savage joy,
From his convulsive grasp the paquet tore
And laid before the King. And there it lay—
The King seem'd chang'd to stone, he fear'd the worst,
And wish'd the trial past. Anon he grasp'd,
Devour'd with greedy gaze the fatal scroll,
While awful stillness reign'd. “Am I a King?
Why, Lords, 'tis treason to the very dregs—
Insulted, mock'd, betray'd, by those I lov'd—
Am I a King? Bid speed a trusty band,
And drag the traitor Ganem to our feet.
This wretch—in deepest dungeon let him learn
To dread a Monarch's wrath. And ye, O Lords,
Breathe not this scene abroad, lest haply one
Elude by flight his doom.” The fiat past,
Swift sped the Ministers of fate, by bribes

'en more than duty urg'd, and all conspir'd
To crush the unconscious Chief. But he, the King,
His brow was calmness all ; no angry burst
Escap'd his lips. In vain midst Ganem's foes
The whisper'd wonder ran. The sudden change
Baffled their utmost skill, and creeping fears,
Tho' groundless all, breath'd poison o'er their hopes.
Yes, on his brow a calm mysterious slept ;
'Twas not that Nature's pleading voice once more
O'er stern revenge prevail'd : 'twas the dread calm
Of fix'd resolve, defying mortal change.

Now dawn'd the important day, and many an eye
Op'd to that dawn, to close ere night in death.
The City swarm'd with life, yet the light laugh
Of levity seem'd hush'd, and rumours vague
Of woe still undefin'd, thro' the pale crowds

In cautious whispers spread. Round Abbas' throne
With thoughtful brow the gath'ring Courtiers pour'd,
Yet he, the Monarch, spoke not—ev'ry eye
Was on him bent, and ev'ry tongue was mute.
Sudden a distant hum that onward swells !
The Monarch starts—yes, well he knew that form,
That, chain'd like meanest slave, before him stood,
And drew the general gaze. O ! what a scene
For the sad Chronicler of human life !
'Twas he whom late acclaiming myriads hail'd
Their country's Saviour, whom a grateful King
Shrin'd in his inmost heart. E'en now he stood
Erect in conscious dignity, that awed
The envious few that gloried in his shame.
Yes, they were few. Amid that breathless crowd
Were hearts that heav'd indignant at the wrong ;
And forms of beauty bent with wistful look,
Each feeling rous'd to sympathy and tears.

With them the crime, if such it might be deem'd,
That woke the royal wrath, a halo flung
Of brighter interest o'er him. Who shall dare
To say to Love, thy will must bend to mine?

“Brav'st thou thy King? where now the rev'ence due
We claim from all—but, Ganem, most from thee?”—
“Witness, great King! these bonds—shall Persia's
throne

Be sullied by the touch? On me alone
Rest the disgrace.”—“Ganem, full well thou know'st
Why thus disgrac'd.—When One of high estate,
Who like a beacon 'mid a stormy world
Should fling unsullied light, like thee descends
To deeds of shame, indignant Honour spurns
The abandon'd wretch.—I lov'd thee as myself,
Yet nurs'd a serpent at my trusting heart.

If thou art wrong'd, before the assembled Peers
Assert thy rights." But Ganem stood unmov'd—
The appeal was made in vain. The Monarch's brow
Grew dark with ire, and thro' the awe-struck throng
A shudder ran. "Wretch, dost thou mock thy doom?
Nor breathe one pray'r for mercy? Bear him hence—
Tomorrow's sun he sees not." O'er his ear
Strange fitful murmurs broke, and from his throne
He sprang indignant. Sudden at his feet,
In hurried groups, fell Persia's high-born dames,
That once had trembled at the daring step
That stay'd a Monarch's wrath. "Hear us, O King,
And let our sex atone that zeal which else
Might e'en rebellious seem. We plead for one,
Haply, to whom thy throne its safety owes.
Think, on his death what thousand horrors wait!
Think of his Bride. Her life is wrapt in his—
The blow once struck, 'tis mockery to hope

Thy cares can soothe,—but who shall comfort thee
When that lov'd voice, once music to thy ear,
Shall break in curses on thee—yes, on thee,
The murd'rer of her peace? Pause, ere too late.
Alas! that brow is ominous! if vain
Our anxious suit, 'tis to stern justice due
To prove his guilt.”—“Plead not for me, fair dames—
Oft for my King I've risk'd my life, and still
I hold it at his bidding. Yet, methinks,
'Tis hard to die, the crime nor known nor prov'd!”
The astonish'd Courtiers trembled. Such a scene
Was rare in Persia's realm, where kingly pow'r
Unquestion'd rul'd. 'Twas Pity's holy spell
That rous'd the gentler sex, in danger's spite,
To brave despotic wrath, but holier still
Were the deep feelings that o'er Ganem's soul
Held tyrant sway. Beneath that tranquil brow
'Twas chaos all. Not for himself he fear'd—

His bride, his lov'd Zuleima, from his arms
Exil'd when most she claimed those shelt'ring cares
A husband best can give,—would that he knew
The beauteous lone one's fate ! O had she borne
That tender pledge, which would the more cement
Their burning loves ? The truth flash'd o'er his brain.
Since their sad parting all was deep suspense—
Her woe or weal he knew not. At her side
Were hearts whose long-tried faith defied all doubt,
And yet no tidings came. Yes, they were sent,
And intercepted all ! It must be so—
His secret was betray'd. The King's fierce wrath,
So sudden and so dread, at one fell swoop
Blasting his proudest hopes—whence was its source ?
It must be so—yet summon'd thus to die,
His lov'd one's fate unknown ! Death never seem'd
So terrible as now. As thro' his brain
Such thoughts tumultuous swept, the Monarch's voice

In tones high-swelling rose:—"Speak, Lords, what
means

This frenzied outrage? Why is Persia's throne,
Where mightiest Kings trembling with awe have bow'd,
Insulted thus? Is treason set at nought?

Home to the Traitor's heart I'll drive the proof,
And shame this daring suit. Ye know how deep
I lodg'd him in my heart; refus'd him nought
Of pow'r and wealth my boundless realm could boast.

O'er all his race, by poverty deprest,
I rain'd my gifts, till, blind to future ill,
E'en with a Brother's name I hail'd the wretch,
And link'd him with the throne. Can he deny
The awful pledge that sanctified his vow,
And the dread penalty of broken faith?

All confident as he stands, before ye all
I dare him to the proof—O madd'ning thought!
That Persia's royal blood, so proudly pure,

Should blend with vulgar streams ; that yon base slave
Should banquet on those charms, which e'en his King
In secret worshipp'd." Here his changing voice
Falter'd. The momentary weakness past,
His tones more fiercely swell'd. "Now for the proof"—
In deepest stillness rapt, the awe-struck throng
Hung on his words. "'Tis here, the fatal scroll—
Trac'd by thy Wife, the partner of thy crime—
Its ev'ry line breathes guilt, broad, flaming guilt,
That shuts the ear of mercy. If ye doubt,
List to the damning proof."

“Come, Ganem, come !

Too deeply lov'd, come share my new-born bliss.
I am a Mother. Cradled on my breast
Nestles an infant boy, whose answ'ring smile
I gaze enraptur'd, as I talk of thee.

Haste, bless thy child. Methinks an Era dawns,
Bright'ning our future years. Alas, I rave !
My Brother's threat rings in my shudd'ring ear
The knell of hope. I cannot lose thee now !
Haste to my arms. Thy voice alone can soothe
My gathering fears—I'll dare the worst with thee.' ”

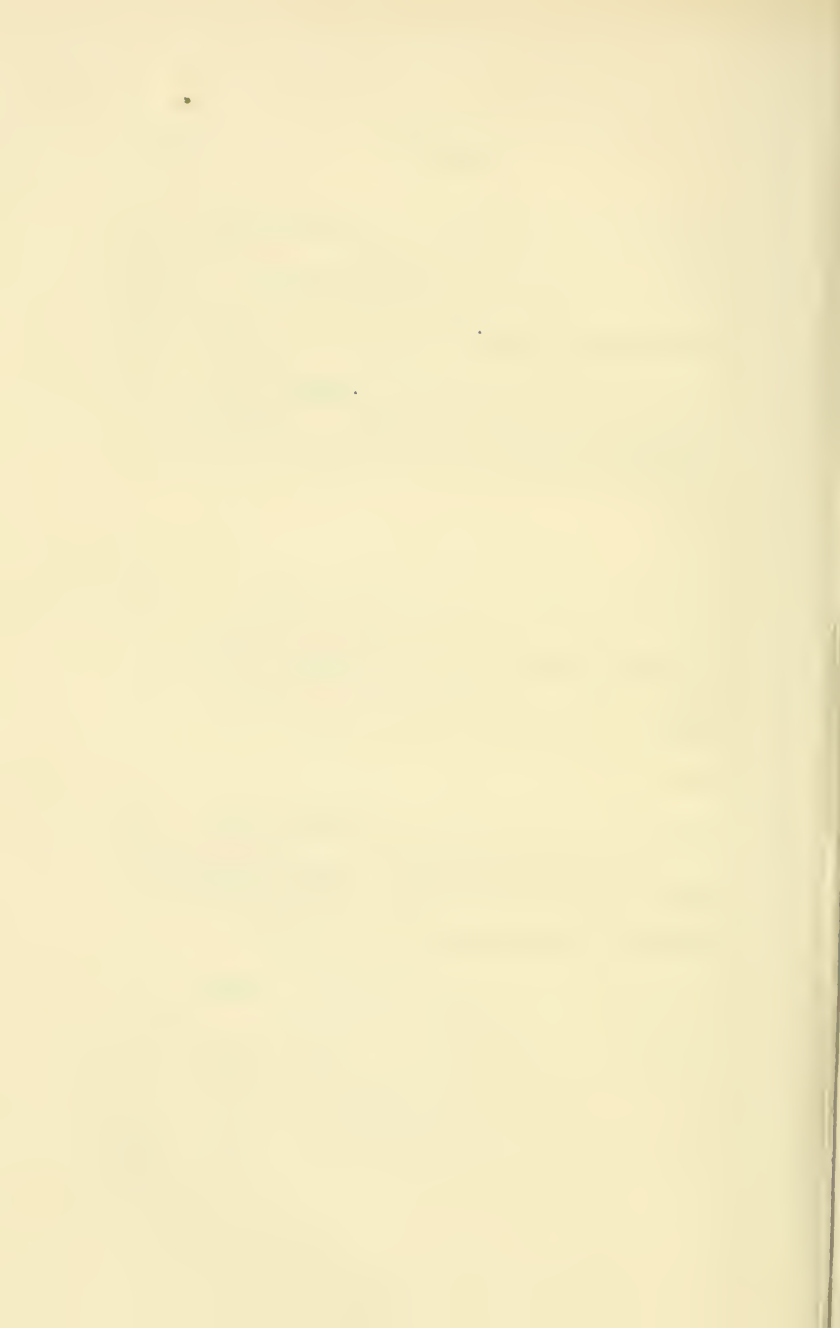
Scarce breath was drawn as o'er each spell-bound ear
The dread avowal fell. The veil was rent—
Stern Justice claim'd her due. Yet 'twas a claim
So fraught with woe, that sick'ning Nature wept
The horrid doom that mock'd her sweetest ties.
Save the low murmur and the fitful sob,
No sound was heard. Sudden, “I thank thee, King,”
Cried Ganem—“thou hast lull'd the fiercest pang
Of life's last hour. A Mother too ! The truth
Will wake the shout of rapture thro' thy realm.

Yes, he is Persia's heir ! The innocent babe
Thou canst not, dar'st not harm. On me, on me
Exhaust thy rage. The Mother and the Child
Are fenc'd with hallow'd guards—injure them not,
Or dread the wrath of Heav'n."—"Guards, drag him
forth

To instant death." The agitated throng
With general rush their cries for mercy rais'd—
"Back, on your lives, or share the traitor's doom"—
The wild appeal was hush'd. "Guards, drag him hence,
And quick report his fate." The impatient King
Deem'd minutes years till with slow step return'd
The minister of death. "Speak, lives he yet?"
"My Liege, be all thy foes, like Ganem now"—
"Bring me his head—ha ! dost thou pause ? thy own
Be surety for thy faith." E'en He, tho' vers'd
In deeds of blood, with unfeign'd horror heard
The fiat pass'd. He would have sav'd—but now

All earthly hope was crush'd. The friendless Chief
Bow'd to the mortal stroke. Before the King
The bleeding proof was laid. While those around
Shudd'ring recoil'd or pour'd the mutter'd curse,
He scann'd the features close, and cried "'Tis well."

Now fiercely rag'd the exterminating sword—
Nor age nor sex thro' Ganem's wide-spread race
'Scap'd royal wrath, till Slaughter sought in vain
One victim more. A cry of horror rose—
The Mother and the Child! their unknown fate
Hung on each trembling tongue. Some fearless heart
The desperate warning sped, by timely flight
To shun th' impending doom—'twas all too late—
Revenge on lightning wings had reached her prey.



ZULEIMA.

Part the Second.



ZULEIMA.



REVENGE had gorg'd her full—the Cup of blood
Was drain'd to th' dregs. The Ministers of death
Low at his feet with rival zeal display'd
The fatal scroll. A burst of rapture hail'd
Each proof of woe, and with exulting laugh,
“ Well have ye earn'd, my friends, the proud reward—
'Tis done, 'tis done, nor have I more to wish.”
E'en as he spoke, a momentary pang
Smote to his heart—but like the arrow's flight,
It left no trace behind to prove its source.

In wild excess of joy, that mock'd restraint,
He shower'd o'er Ganem's foes whate'er of pow'r
The slaughter'd race enjoy'd—that hated name
'Twas treason e'en to breathe. A favour'd few
Grasp'd the proud helm of state, and from the throne,
Like jealous phalanx, drove the voice of Truth.

Months rolled away, but not with rolling months
Kept pace the Monarch's wrath. E'en Etna's fires,
Their fury spent, subside at length to sleep.
The pale abstracted brow, a weariness
Of all that pomp could give, the stealthy walk
At silent eve, midst those deserted bow'rs—
The lost Zuleima's haunt—all proved how chang'd
The Monarch's heart. The awe-inspiring frown,
Herald of bursting wrath, seem'd wholly quench'd
In Mercy's gentle tide. Where'er he mov'd,

'Twas not as erst, from crowds of trembling slaves
Demanding homage. Tears spontaneous bless'd
The Father of his people, greater now
Than when enthron'd in victory and blood.
Still on his brow a gloom habitual hung—
Mirth woke no answer'ing smile. Oft had he turn'd
With mutter'd curse from infant innocence,
Whene'er it cross'd his path. Now on the sight
Dwelt his long ling'ring gaze, and busy thought
Was breath'd in sighs. Nor vain his subjects' pray'r ;
He woo'd, he won, and in his wedded arms
Clasp'd birth and beauty. Now the stranger-smile
Brighten'd his look. Again thro' bow'r and hall,
Mirth's festive voice the slumb'ring echoes woke.
He felt no longer desolate. A chain
Of new sensations link'd him still to life,
That danc'd with feathery feet, but when the name
Of Father thrill'd his ears, joy's whelming flood

Swept uncontroll'd. Exulting Persia heard
Her Monarch's voice, that rous'd his subject realms
To share his bliss. 'Twas one wide festival!—
The captive leap'd unfetter'd—far and near
In lavish tide the royal bounty flow'd.
Years sweetly pass'd, and oft in pride of heart
The doting Sire to public throngs display'd
His rosy Treasure and their future King.

Woe, woe to Persia and that doting Sire!
Those dazzling visions, like the frosty web,
The short-lived wonder of the infant gaze,
Shrank at the test of truth. O, who shall 'scape
When the death-Angel at the appointed hour
Summons the powerless wretch? His rosy Boy,
His wedded Partner, to the fiat bow'd.
Thrice happy they! but who can paint the Sire,

The desolate, the bereav'd, as fix'd he stood
In all the o'erwhelming majesty of grief?
His mind's best energies, so finely wrought,
Seem'd wreck'd in utter hopelessness of cure.

Slow from this deep desponding dream he woke,
And settled sadness brooded o'er his soul.
He gave command. In vast magnificence
Rose the proud tomb, whose mighty grandeur mock'd
The wealth of Empires. There, at midnight-hour
He held communion with the hallow'd dead,
For there his wild delirious fancy deem'd
Their Spirits present with him. Once it chanc'd,
Surprised by sleep, o'er his lone slumber stole
Those sunny times, when fair Zuleima's smile
Lighten'd each weary hour. Again he sought
The accustom'd bow'r, where She, the enchantress, held

Her fairy court. Again her radiant charms
Chain'd his idolatrous gaze, and o'er his ear
The well-known lute its melting witch'ry pour'd.
He woke—'twas awful wonder! Was he now
A tenant of her bow'r?—still breath'd the lute
Its thrilling tones, till thro' the long-drawn vaults
They slowly died away. 'Twas no deceit,
No idle mockery! In wild amaze,
“Mirza!” he cried, “for thou alone hast shar'd
My lonely vigils, heard'st thou aught e'en now
Like heaven-born music?”—“Who, my Liege, would
 haunt
These cavern'd solitudes?”—“O, 'twas the lute
Of one too deeply lov'd, of her whose smile
Was once life's sweetest solace! Yet I flung
Madly this pearl away, and in its stead
Hugg'd black despair. Zuleima, thou art dead!
'Twas I that murder'd thee! Thy innocent blood

Rests on my head—not Ocean's self can wash
The deep, deep stain, and yet I live! O whence
Can comfort come?" The awe-struck Mirza heard
The breaking heart's outpourings—ne'er before,
Since the dread day of blood, Zuleima's name
Dropt from his lips. 'Twas mingled now with tears
Of keen remorse. O, he had treasur'd hopes
Which yet he dare not breathe—he long'd to cheer
The humbled King, but prudence yet forbade.

Meantime the cares of state, to feeble hands
Abandon'd all, thro' Persia's groaning realm
Rous'd discontent. Redress was sought in vain,
And neighb'ring Pow'rs, with arts insidious, trove,
To snap the weaken'd link. The smother'd flame
Long time portentous heav'd, till in one blaze
It burst. Rebellion thro' the raging land

Rear'd its unblushing front. The royal troops
Or fled dismay'd or join'd the insurgent host.
O'er Abbas' ear the tale, like thunder, broke—
The Courtiers gather'd round him. Dastard fear
Pal'd ev'ry cheek. Where now those patriot hearts,
That, prodigal of life, at duty's call
Had grappled with the worst? And where was He
Whose voice had hush'd the bursting roar to peace,
His Country's saviour and the People's friend?
Where, where was he? and Echo answered, where?
The awful past swept o'er his shudd'ring ear,
Deep'ning the horror of the present hour.
'Twas now he felt, and ev'ry panting vein
Heav'd to the truth, how dread the penalty
Of lawless guilt! He rush'd from prying eyes
Where lonely shades a soothing stillness shed.
Yes, there he lay, whom not his meanest slave
Would gaze with envy. Lord of mighty realms,

Yet scarce one friend with fearless virtue blest
To shield his tott'ring throne. "What tho' I stand
Alone," he wildly cried, "unaw'd I'll meet
The rolling storm. Hurl, Heav'n! thy fiercest bolts
On Abbas' head. He owns thy vengeance just,
Nor deprecates thy wrath. A Coward's name
'Tis that I fear. Be mine, be mine, to die
As I have liv'd, a King." When all his pow'rs
Were rous'd to dare the worst, why stands he thus
Rooted to earth? why glares his stedfast eye
Thus bent on vacancy? The lute, the lute!
Again its thrilling notes, distinct and clear,
Float on the silent air. Zuleima's name
Hangs trembling on his lips. 'Twas the lov'd strain
Whose pow'rful spell the sweet Enchantress woke
To chase his deep'ning gloom, when cares of state
Hung heavy on his soul. And still it breath'd
Its wonted charm, calming his frenzied brain

Till all was peace. Now first the astonish'd King
Gaz'd conscious round. Yes, in Zuleima's bow'r,
Scene of his purest joys ere stain'd with guilt,
Alone he stood. Yet not alone—within
'Twas shadowy gloom, without, the deep blue sky
Was wreath'd with stars that 'thwart the leafy roof,
Stirr'd by the breeze, their twinkling lustre shed.
One slanting beam slept on the flow'ry throne
Where oft Zuleima sat. She sat there still!
Or whence that Shape? It wore the wonted smile,
And beckon'd his approach. Resistless awe
Crept o'er his heart. It rose—he rush'd to meet—
'Twas unsubstantial air, yet in his grasp
He held a female robe. Zuleima's name
Rang thro' the bower. "Appear, appear, blest Shade!
O soothe as thou wert wont—my earthly hopes
Are wither'd all—I have no trusty friends
Like thee and thy belov'd—yet wild with rage

I murder'd both. Not e'en thy innocent babe
My madness spar'd. O had thy Ganem liv'd,
Rebellion at his voice had shrunk dismay'd—
But now, the best and truest of my realm
Sleep in their graves, and o'er my tott'ring throne
Dread retribution hangs. To thee, to thee
I turn. Earth has for me no refuge left."
Sudden a deep-drawn sigh ; and then a voice !
The awe-struck air in horrid stillness stood.
“ When pure Contrition sues, e'en blessed Souls
Bend from their heav'nly bow'rs the pray'r to greet.
I hear thee, Abbas. May thy alter'd heart
Win thee acceptance here. But ere releas'd
From this vain world, new trials yet await
Thy eve of life. Lift that dejected brow—
My Ganem (now for ever mine) will breathe
His spirit o'er the land. List—hear'st thou not
Thy War-steed's neigh, that chides its ling'ring Lord

In deep despondence lost. Haste—fearless meet
The rebel hordes. On Mirza's faith depend,
And leave the rest to Heav'n." The voice was hush'd—
The prostrate Monarch rose, but not, as erst,
Deprest by slavish fears. Each panting vein
Beat high with new-born hopes. No chilling doubts
Hung o'er his soul. He deem'd some Pow'r unseen
Marshall'd his onward path ; and stronger grew
The visionary spell, when Mirza's voice
(Mirza, the approv'd of Heaven to aid his King)
Broke Eve's lone calm, and loudly hail'd his name.
They met. "My Liege! what wonders thicken round!
Nor yet the least, thy firm, elastic step,
The wonted fire that lightens in thy look.
E'en now, some Horseman thro' the city gates
Urg'd his wild steed, whose hoofs seem'd hung with
flame.
All gaz'd with awe, and shudder'd as they heard

The fitful cry, 'The dead, the dead arise
To avenge the King!' As swift the Unknown sped,
Yes, there were some, while o'er his naked head
The moonlight stream'd, that sent the whisper forth,
' 'Tis he, 'tis Ganem, from the grave restor'd !'
The tidings spread—the whisper grew a shout !
He pass'd thy vet'ran guards—O well they knew
The shadowy form, and hail'd the cheering cry.
'The dead, the dead arise to avenge the King !'
None talk of fear. A spirit is awake
That, aim'd aright, will beat rebellion down.
On comes the opposing host, and Persia's sons
In countless myriads swell the hostile ranks.
Then haste—stout hearts, tho' few, demand their King.
E'en thy proud steed, caparison'd for war,
How or by whom the keen inquiry fails,
Mocks all restraint, and claims the coming strife.'"
The Monarch heard—his heart exulting swell'd

At every proof that more than mortal pow'r
Will'd these unnatural sights that mock'd belief—
Yet all for him. “Mirza, thy anxious cares
I grateful own. E'en as thou wilt, direct
My onward course, nor doubt a happy end.”

'Twas midnight—still in watchful council sat
The rebel Chiefs. The fatal die was cast,
And yet they waver'd. Yes, the coming dawn
Would teem with great events, and light them on
To vict'ry or a grave. Round victory's wreath
They felt regret would twine. They fear'd not death,
Yet, like unnatural sons, with hostile foot
They bruise'd their parent soil. In such a cause
Defeat would brand them with a traitor's guilt.
They lov'd their King, had bled to crown his fame;
Tho' driv'n by tyrant rule that mock'd appeal

To join their Country's foes, they lov'd him still.
Had Ganem liv'd—Sudden wild onward shouts
Rose on the breeze of night. Within the tent
A Soldier breathless rush'd—"Arm, arm, my Lords!
Yet vain is human might to cope with Heav'n—
The grave gives up its dead! Again in arms
The murder'd Ganem leads the royal host—
Ye start—O, doubt me not! Throughout our camp
The panic spreads. The pow'rs of Heav'n are leagu'd
On Abbas' side." As mute with awe they bent,
Solemn and slow arose a thrilling cry,
"The dead, the dead arise, to avenge the King!"
They shudder'd at the sound. O well they knew
The warrior Form that glided slow to sight!
They gaz'd upon the dead—'twas Ganem's self,
E'en in the very armour that he wore,
The snowy plumes, the rosy scarf, which once
Beam'd as their guiding star in battle-strife.

They mov'd not, spoke not—"Is it thus we meet?
Woe, woe to Persia when her rebel sons,
League with her deadliest foes to slay her peace!
O little dream ye of the fatal toils
That close you round. E'en now in night-cabal,
Those whom ye deem your friends, encamp'd apart,
Weave the dark plot to snare you to your doom.
O blindly brave! On these your vengeance hurl,
Now, ere too late. The royal Abbas comes,
And who shall stand his might? Beware, beware!
The dead, the dead arise to avenge the King!"
One feeling seem'd to fire the list'ning throng—
They rose—the parting Figure wav'd its arm,
As if to check approach—'twas lost in gloom.—
Now burst that feeling forth—they deem'd the voice
Commission'd from above, nor paus'd to doubt
Its hallow'd source. At once their gladden'd hearts
In unison replied. Long had they felt,

But dar'd not breathe the wish, now loud exprest,
To atone the past. They wav'd their naked blades,
Ne'er to be sheath'd, till they had well redeem'd
Their foul desertion from their Country's cause.
Wide spread the wondrous tale. The livelong night
The warrior Shade its awful mission ply'd.
All heard, all knew—woe to the wilful wretch
That falter'd now in duty's proud career.
On came the royal pow'rs—the scanty rill,
Swell'd in its course, now roll'd a mighty tide,
Still gathering strength. The exulting Abbas felt
His throne was sav'd, but not by mortal hand.

Bright rose the expected dawn. A lofty ridge
The Monarch reach'd, and gaz'd with anxious look
The wide expanse. As yet a silvery mist
With its white billows shrouded all beneath.

As slow it rolled away, the rebel host
Was full expos'd. Awhile he silent gaz'd—
“Mirza,” at length, “how loathes my sick'ning heart
The coming strife, which, howsoe'er it end,
Must wake severest woe. But yet 'tis strange—
I see nor helm, nor spear, nor banner'd pomp,
But a vast multitude, whose naked heads
Speak aught but foul intent.” But stranger still,
In lengthen'd line slow issuing from the crowd
A Train unarm'd approach'd. Each in his hand
A palm branch held. “Let us descend, my Liege,
Methinks that mission speaks repentant thoughts,
Nor will a sword be drawn in rage to day.”
As near they drew, well knew the astonish'd King
The traitor Chiefs. Familiar to his sight
Was many a downcast brow, whose scars were won
In glory's hallow'd strife, how humbled now!
With one wild rush they fell at Abbas' feet ;

While One, whose age, whose wounds, in other cause
Had claim'd respect—"Thus prostrate in the dust,
We own, dread King, our guilt. Thy sacred life
Is Alla's care, and e'en the dead awake,
Charg'd with the precious trust, yet madly blind
We thirsted for thy blood, and bar'd the blade
Of hellish treason. Vengeance now is thine—
Insulted Persia claims our forfeit lives—
Yet one redeeming truth may for us plead—
That neighb'ring Power, which jealous of thy fame
Had oft defy'd, impatient of defeat,
Thy godlike wrath, with art insidious fann'd
The flame which else had died. It proffer'd all
Its warrior strength the glorious cause to aid—
Madly we hugg'd the bait—there lurk'd beneath
The deep-laid snare. With thine our doom was seal'd.
Yes, Ganem rous'd us from our dream of death :
This night he rose in mercy from the grave

To warn us of our fate. With trembling awe,
Yet resolute to prove our alter'd hearts,
We sprang in silence on our trait'rous friends,
That now in chains from thee their sentence wait.
O let our penitence that pardon win,
By Ganem not denied, for he, e'en he,
Will plead our desp'rate cause. The Vision comes—
'Tis he!" In breathless haste all eyes were turn'd
Where, soon descried, the unearthly Rider urg'd
His shadowy steed. The awe-struck Monarch stood
Rapt in the all-absorbing sight. His soul
Shook with conflicting thoughts, that strove in vain
To doubt the appalling truth. 'Twas Ganem's self!
Yet wherefore thus, rous'd from his iron sleep?
O was he sent with vengeance arm'd to drag
His murd'rer hence? Soon better thoughts arose :
Soft o'er his memory stole with soothing spell
That twilight-hour, when from the bow'rs of bliss

Zuleima bent and calm'd his gathering fears.

“ Herald of peace, Zuleima ! 'tis on thee

Again I call. O ease my whelming doubts—

That form—thy best belov'd—comes he in wrath,

Or fraught with gentle feelings like thine own ?”

The well-known lute swell'd startling to his ear—

Was it a dream ? Low bending at his side

A shrouded figure knelt. “ If not for mine,

Yet for his sake whose steed comes swiftly on,

Turn not unshaken from thy Subjects' suit.”

“ Who art thou ? speak—I grasp thy lifted arm—

'Tis fraught with life.” The cloak was flung aside,—

“ Mock me not thus ! Zuleima ! at thy sight

Strange terrors thicken round me. Here I stand—

Now rain thy curses on me.”— “ O not so,”

She murmur'd forth—“ I fain would bless—but thou—

Canst thou forgive ?” A gush of rapture heav'd

His grateful heart. “’Tis I from thee should claim
Oblivion of the past. As in my arms
I fold thee thus, methinks I live again
Those sunny hours, when thou wert all to me !
But whence that Shape ? O save me from the sight !”
The warrior Form leap’d from the panting steed,
And slow advanc’d. The Monarch trembling gaz’d—
O such was Ganem, beauteous as the morn,
When his young arm the tide of battle turn’d,
And sav’d his fallen King ! but he was dead,
Murder’d by him he sav’d ! then wherefore here ?
Cold sweat bedew’d his limbs, he turn’d away—
Again a voice, that ever spoke of peace,
Breath’d soft, “ O let my child thy kindness share—
Thy lov’d Zuleima sues—one word from thee
Will ease her widow’d woes of half their weight.”
He heard—his bounding heart thro’ ev’ry pulse

In unison replied. Yet who can speak
His soul's fierce struggles, as with hurried gaze
He scann'd the graceful youth ? all, all, reviv'd—
Had his brave Father liv'd, how had he joy'd
In such a Son—but where that Father now ?
Still that uplifted brow, on which he dwelt,
No rancour wore, but beam'd with modest hope
That sweet success might crown his Mother's suit.
In boundless confidence his fears were lost—
'Twas Nature's triumph now ! Midst burning tears
He clasp'd the silent pleader to his heart.
Then to the thronging Chiefs—"Behold," he cried,
"Your future King ! And ye, deluded Men !
'Tis for his sake I grant ye grace—arise—
And let your alter'd lives your truth attest.
But, Mirza, 'tis to thee this blissful hour
Is wholly due. O hadst thou blindly done

The desp'rate biddings of a madman's ire!
Be ever thus, and long o'er Persia's sons
Thy bright example, like a beacon, shine !”

But there was One, that in the accustom'd bow'r
Still shed enchantment o'er his eve of life.
And, when his murm'ring heart arraign'd the past,
Her calm demeanour aw'd, and all was peace.

C A I N.

C A I N.



'TWAS yet an infant World—Suns rose and set
In lonely grandeur, and the vestal Moon
In silver loveliness, thro' fields of blue
Her spangled path pursued, bidding meek night
Rival the garish day. Earth's youthful brow
Was crown'd with brilliant wreaths of fruit and flow'r,—
All spoke the hand divine. Yet 'twas around
One mighty Solitude. No songs of praise
In mingled chorus burst from grateful lips.
E'en from that leafy bow'r, at morn, at eve,

Rose not the accustom'd hymn. There Adam sat
Clasping our wretched Mother. 'Twas the hour
When at the porch she took her wonted stand
To catch her lov'd one's voice, when cheerily
He drove his homeward flock. But now he slept
Death's strange, unconscious sleep, his first, as yet
His only victim. Thought was agony,
So new, so terrible! Her's was the sin
Whose penalty was death! Her's was the sin
That rous'd her first-born with a brother's blood
To stain the innocent ground! And where was he,
The murd'rer Cain? were they no more to meet?
She hop'd, she fear'd, and could almost forgive.

Far fled the Murd'rer, onward, onward still,
A spectre at his heels. Oft as he turn'd
It seem'd to clutch him. Wilder grew his speed,

Till Nature sank o'erpower'd. A still small voice
Stole o'er his ear—" 'Tis done—there is no rest
For guilt like thine—'tis thy dread doom to live,
And wish in vain to die ;"—whence came the sound
So fraught with woe, yet breath'd in accents soft
As infant's sleep ? none o'er him hung, yet still
The whisper ceas'd not—'twas his heart alone
That shrin'd the awful Witness : 'twas a hell
No flood could quench, now first by man endur'd.

'Twas night—sweet slept the moonlight on the cliff
That flung its giant shadow o'er the vale,
Sheltering the leafy bow'r, whence frequent rose
The low lament ; there the lone inmates wept
Their sad bereavement, render'd sadder still
By deep compunctious visitings. No pray'r
Can their lost bliss restore, no burning tears

Annul the sentence of offended Heav'n.

'Twas but a choice of woe—the cherish'd dead,

The Murd'rer's unknown fate, alternate claim'd

The gloomy thought. He came not yet, that wretch,

Who, steep'd in guilt, they felt, was still their Son.

But She, his desolate Wife, retir'd apart,

Sat motionless—no tear was on her cheek,

Despair had dried its source. Around her knees

Her children clung, wond'ring to ask in vain

The wonted kiss. Resistless at her heart

One mighty purpose heav'd, its hallow'd source

The pure devotedness of Woman's Love.

“Is it his voice?—Morn, noon, and night, methinks

I hear that voice—it summons me away—

And yet I linger. Thou art dearer still,

Thou lov'd, abandon'd one! 'tis I, 'tis I,

Am rebel to my truth. Come, Children, come!
Be Providence our guide.—Thus, hand in hand,
We'll seek your Father. E'en an unknown world
Shall daunt not. Where he is, our home must be."

She paus'd one moment, where, with watching spent,
Her slumb'ring Parents lay. Not for herself,
Her fears were all for them : Yet still resolv'd
She waver'd not. All other ties were weak
To those which link'd her with a Husband's fate.
She hurried on. She issued from the porch—
How still, how beautiful the moonlit World !
It seem'd in smiles array'd to woo her forth,
And cheer her pilgrim path. Yet all around
How awful in its loneliness ! She clasp'd
Closer each little hand, and reach'd at length
Where two rude altars stood. O, well she knew !

She sicken'd at the sight. The past reviv'd
In all its horrors. On the Murd'rer's shrine
A lamb for Sacrifice seem'd newly laid—
But laid by whom? Her Parents shunn'd the spot—
What unknown hand had deck'd the shrine of guilt
For holy rite? Amazement chain'd her feet—
Her heart beat high with feelings undefin'd.
She sank upon her knees—"Hear, God of Truth!
Suppliant I kneel, yet tremble at my prayer—
Hear not in wrath—impute it not as sin,
That thus by stealth I quit my Parents' bow'r—
Thou read'st the inmost heart, and well Thou know'st,
What mighty impulse lures me thus from home.
I love my Parents, but my Husband more—
Tho' steep'd in guilt, I love him not the less,
But burn to lead him back to home and Thee.
I seek a Husband, these a Father seek—
Be Thou our guide—hear not in wrath—but grant

Some gracious sign our drooping hearts to cheer.
E'en now, that altar—Lord! thou know'st by whom,
Is drest for sacrifice. Bid fire from Heav'n
Consume the victim." Rapt in deepest awe
She bow'd her head—she ventur'd not a look,
Till from her children burst a gladden'd cry—
The victim blaz'd—how glow'd her grateful heart
With confidence! She felt not friendless now.
“ My Children, let us hence—a God of love
Smiles on our search, and joy shall yet be ours.”
Sudden a scream rang thro' the silent night!
It leap'd from cliff to cliff till heard no more.
Whence came the sound? if human, One alone
Thro' the wide world—and he! with quicken'd step
She hurried on. Hope brighten'd in her look—
Blest Faith! she felt thy healing influence now.

Meanwhile, the arrow rankling at his heart,
From clime to clime the guilty Wand'rer pass'd.
He could not flee himself. Where'er he trod
The ground seem'd red with blood. The limpid wave
He stoop'd to drink; e'en there the mark of wrath
Stamp'd on his brow, his blasted vision met.
Beasts fled his sight; e'en in their inmost lair
He brav'd their rage, courting the stroke of death—
They harm'd him not. Flow'rs wither'd at his touch—
All own'd the awful curse. Within a cave
As once he rush'd, it seem'd to him a home,
So dark, so lonely, shut from searching day—
His shatter'd brain grew calm. The Outcast slept,
And sweetest visions o'er his slumber stole.
He dream'd of home, of all those sunny hours
When love and peace and innocence were his.
His children climb'd his knees, and she, his wife,
The pride, the solace of his doting heart,

Sat by his side, and ev'ry wish was blest.
He woke—her thrilling tones still swept his ear ;
'Twas but a dream—he woke, if such could be,
To deeper wretchedness—"O God!" he cried
In bitterness of soul, "if in thy wrath
Thy mercy slumbers not—mock me not thus !
I own my guilt—'tis idle vaunt in me,
A feeble crawling worm, to brave thy pow'r.
Crush these warm feelings that to me are Hell,
And freeze my heart to stone. Give me my Wife
To cheer my loneliness—Hast thou not sent
Thy fiat forth, that husband, wife, are one,
Sever'd from all, in closest union bound ?
Give me my children—they are part of me—
'Tis thou, e'en thou, hast form'd me what I am,
Nor canst thou break the laws Thyself hast made.
Is that thy voice ? Thy thunder shakes the earth—
Lord ! I am thine ; do with me as thou wilt."

A momentary brightness fill'd the cave,
And the wild thunder's shout was heard abroad.
He deem'd the Avenger near, and rush'd to meet
The welcome blow. He linger'd on a rock
That high in air o'erhung the wide-spread scene,
Bath'd in the splendour of the Ev'ning sun.
If in the thunder burst the voice of wrath,
'Twas Mercy's triumph now. O'er the fair world
A Sabbath stillness slept. It seem'd the abode
Of purest Spirits, that with guilt like his
Would spurn communion. Yet its deep repose,
Its placid smile a moment lull'd his heart.
He gaz'd, unconscious that the silent plain
Ere long would swarm with life,—that his own race
Would people all the soil, and cities rear
Their tow'red heads, and infant arts commence
Their beauteous reign. “O wondrous land!” he cried,
“Here could I dwell, and taste of peace once more,

If peace could e'er be mine. Hear, gracious God !”
And on his knees the impassion'd Pleader fell—
“ Let me not pine alone ! I ask not now
My Parents' blessing—We no more must meet.
Their curses I could bear, but not the look
Of silent sorrow, deep'ning day by day,
Past hope, past cure,—for nought can wake the dead.
Give me my Wife ! O, let me hence return,
And win her to my arms. She will not shrink
To share my lot : thy hallow'd voice has stamp'd
Our earthly ties, which death alone can rend.
If thy unchanging wrath this boon withhold,
Bid roll thy thunder !—that dread sign shall ring
The knell of hope, and with despair alone
Must all my wand'rings be.” He bow'd the head
In patient agony. All Nature wore
A sweeter smile, and richer fragrance breath'd.
Bright o'er his naked head a Sunbeam fell—

It seem'd a silent herald from above,
Fraught with acceptance of his pray'r. He felt
Its healing influence warm upon his heart.
The fount of tears, whose source had long been dry,
Now gush'd amain. The soften'd Outcast wept.
He sprang upon his feet, and down the steep
Wild rushing, wav'd his sinewy arms on high,
While in his look unearthly splendour shone.
Homeward he turn'd, but lurk'd in caves by day,
Lest on his sight his sorrowing Parents steal.

Past was the sultry noon ; the Night wind wav'd
Its fresh'ning wing on Nature's languid brow—
And bath'd with dewy pearl the drooping rose.
The deep blue curtain of Jehovah's tent
Was bright with clust'ring stars ; and all was still,
Save when the lapse of distant waterfall,

Like softest music, floated on the air.
'Twas now slow creeping o'er the shadowy cliff
Shelt'ring our Parents' lowly bow'r, some Shape
Was dimly seen—Is it some prowling beast
Stealing from midnight lair in quest of prey,
Oft pausing, as the fitful breeze swept by,
As if to scent its victim? O, 'tis he—
The Murd'rer, Cain! trembling he treads once more
Home's hallow'd haunts—O, that seas interven'd!
What if his Parents cross'd his path! cold sweat
Bedew'd his lab'ring brow. In every gust
Strange voices came and unknown faces mock'd
His whelming fears. In all its freshness rose
The awful deed of blood; stretch'd at his feet
His martyr'd Victim lay, whose look of love
E'en in the pangs of death more fervent beam'd—
The thought was agony! Howling he fled
To seek in change of place a short relief.

Vain hope ! His wild career was quickly stay'd—
Yes, 'twas the scene of death !—beside him rose
The well-known altars—one was wrapt in shade ;
Soft o'er the other hung a fleecy gleam
That seem'd to link the favour'd shrine with Heav'n ;
And round its base the silent flock repos'd.
He gasp'd for breath, and fix'd as statue gaz'd
Each dread memorial of the guilty past.
At length with with'ring cry, "'Tis thou, O God !
Hast led me here—thy wrath no slumber knows—
O ! mark my wasted form, my haggard cheek,
And pity if thou canst. One effort more
To win thy fav'ring smile ;—if that be vain—
If doom'd by thee to never-dying woe,
E'en to the utmost verge of this new world
Desp'rate I'll creep, there hug my griefs alone
Where thou canst reach me not. Alas ! I rave—
Where can I hide to 'scape thy searching eye ?

My wife, my children too ! if God so will,
We meet no more. O might that blessed light
That crowns yon favour'd shrine, in sign of peace,
On mine descend ! Like its lost builder's fate,
'Tis dark and desolate.—One effort more—
And if a breaking heart find grace with God,
Such heart is mine,—this effort be the last !”
The shrine, in part decay'd, he straight renew'd,
And a fair lamb, that couch'd among the flock,
He chose, he kill'd, and on the altar laid—
Is it his Mother's voice ? he starts, he turns,—
A female form glides onward through the gloom !
Frantic with fear and rous'd to maniac strength
He scales the neighb'ring cliff, and on its top
Close crouching, peers below. The shadowy depth
He could not pierce ; yet tones of mortal plaint
Reach'd indistinct his ear. Unwonted awe
Smote to his heart—the crisis of his fate,

It seem'd at hand. Sudden an arrowy flame
Rush'd from the parted Heav'ns and lighted up
The vale beneath. With wild elastic bound
He sprang upon his feet. The victim blaz'd!
Yes, on that shrine, where God's eternal curse
Seem'd doom'd to rest, the sacred fire had fall'n!
Its vivid flashes stream'd on gentle forms
That knelt beside—his wife, his children too!
His rapt'rous scream, his long terrific laugh,
Rang thro' the echoing rocks—the dizzy height
Alarm'd him not—down the precipitous steep,
Where scarce advent'rous tread could footing find,
He leap'd from crag to crag, and reach'd the vale.

They met. O, words are impotent to tell
That meeting's mingled agony and joy!
Hand lock'd in hand, gazing each other's face,

To mark and weep the bitter changes there.
Yet were they comforted—her patient ear
Drank all his griefs, thus robb'd of half their sting.
She heard, she sooth'd. Oft as his haggard look
Turn'd quickly round, and with unconscious grasp
He dragg'd her on, as fearful of pursuit,
She read his secret soul, nor idly strove
To lure him back to home. As far behind
They left that home, more calm his soften'd mien,
More firm his step, and oft he smil'd to hear
The rapt'rous shouts that burst from Childhood's lips
As morning trembled o'er the awaken'd East,
And gave the wonders of an unknown World.

But she! as on that unknown world she gaz'd,
The awful future gather'd round her heart.

She murmur'd not. Strong was the staff of Faith
On which she lean'd. She felt, exulting felt,
The glowing truth, that God was ev'ry where,
And soon the rising throb was hush'd to peace.

ST. PAUL AT MALTA.

ST. PAUL AT MALTA.



O REST, thou raging Sea! night, pitchy night
Deepens thy awful roar. Rest, mighty Sea,
Ere thy fierce billows whelm yon gallant bark
That sweeps terrific on. 'Tis seen by fits
As burst the lurid fires, that ope and shut
The blacken'd skies. Now on thy topmost surge
Awhile it quiv'ring hangs, now headlong sinks
Lost in the gulf beneath. O! for that voice
That bade thy waves be still, and all was peace.

Faint peer'd the struggling dawn. The toil-worn Crew
Hail'd its first gleam, as herald of relief;
But whence? In mockery of helm and sail
The bark at random drove. They shrank aghast,
Gazing each mountain wave whose downward rush
Had seal'd their doom. In front, a rocky isle
In unknown horror gloom'd,—all seem'd despair
And hopeless woe, but o'er that lonely bark
The shield of Mercy hung. A voice went forth—
“Of all that throng the deck, not one shall fall—
My prophet is among you—for his sake
Your rescued lives shall disappoint the deep.”
Yes, He was there, the chosen of our Lord,
To spread thro' heathen lands redeeming love—
The holy Paul. Calm and unmov'd he stood,
While round him hung the pale, disorder'd crowd.
His lips breath'd comfort, his example cheer'd :
'Twas not the reckless courage of despair

That nerv'd their kindling souls. Awe-struck they drank
His glowing words, nor doubted as he pour'd
The midnight message of the Christian's God.
Yet He, a prisoner midst his guards !—the poor,
The opprest of all, the hunted unto death !
Tho', at his feet, the Oppressor trembling crouch'd,
No conscious triumph fir'd the Apostle's look—
A brighter meekness deepen'd o'er his brow.

On swept the groaning bark—O, can it 'scape
The naked rocks that fence that lonely isle ?
No ready haven spread its shelt'ring arms—
On swept the groaning bark—its doom was near.
Sudden an opening creek ! there deep in sand
The imbedded Vessel lay. Her parted beams
Yield to the whelming surge, and midst the waves
The struggling crew, on scatter'd fragments, reach

The neighb'ring strand. The Deep seem'd struck with
awe

Nor gorg'd one single prey. And now they stood,
Forlorn and shiv'ring on the naked soil,
Scarce less terrific than the roaring main.
They gaz'd the rugged cliffs, and fear'd beyond
Or rav'nous beasts, or man more fierce than they.
Sudden, wild rushing in tumultuous tide,
Pour'd unknown throngs around—while pale Suspense
Dwelt on their threat'ning mien, the man of God
Advanc'd to meet. He spoke ; each soften'd brow
Its fierce expression lost ; all strife was o'er,
Save the sweet gen'rous strife in Mercy's cause.
They sprang to aid—and still their wond'ring gaze
Pursu'd his step—with all the fire of youth
Intense he labour'd for the general good—
It seem'd as if he will'd, and all was done.
In many a heap the welcome fuel rose,

And round the frequent fires the shiv'ring groups
The timely succour bless'd. As o'er the flame
The Apostle bent to feed its dying pow'r,
Sudden a Viper, deadliest of its brood,
Crept from the heat and fasten'd on his hand.
The shudd'ring Natives saw : from tongue to tongue
Suspicious whispers ran. "'Tis some lost wretch
Laden with crime, haply some deed of blood :
What tho' escap'd the deep, stern Vengeance claims
His forfeit life, and will not be denied."
Meantime, the unconscious Saint, with brow unmov'd,
Shook off the reptile, and uninjur'd stood ;
And still they gaz'd expecting, as the taint
Crept thro' his venom'd blood, his frame to swell
Or drop upon the ground a blacken'd corse.
In vain—erect, unharm'd, the Apostle stood.
Now wonder ceas'd, and adoration grew.
“A god, a god,” burst forth the gen'ral shout !

“A god, a god,” the answering rocks replied !
The astonish’d Isle, thro’ all its windings, heard
And rush’d to gaze, to question, and adore.
By cries of welcome hail’d on ev’ry side,
’Twas now the shipwreck’d strangers found a home,
And lost in present ease the perils past ;
But he, the humble Saint, to toil inur’d,
He deem’d each hour unblest, save on its wing
Was mark’d some proof of never-dying faith,
And pure devotion in his Master’s cause.
Thee, Publius, thee, when in thy Father’s veins
The fever rag’d and bow’d him to the grave,
What awful truths o’erwhelm’d ! thy power, thy wealth,
The costly sacrifice, the frantic vow,
O, they were all as dust, to that one pray’r—
That simple pray’r by lowly Stranger breath’d !
Thou heard’st that pray’r, breath’d to the Christian’s
God,

Unseen, yet ev'ry where—As o'er the bed
The Apostle bent, an undefined awe
Thrill'd at thy breast. Here was no pomp of words,
No idle mockery of heathen rite,
But one short pray'r pour'd from a trusting heart,
Devotion's purest shrine : As from the grave,
Thy Father rose renew'd. Thou would'st have knelt
In grateful transport at the Apostle's feet,
And class'd him with thy gods. Thy erring zeal
He meekly check'd—dwelt on the one true God
And the rich glories of redeeming love,
Till to its centre shook thy trembling heart.
Wide spread the tale yet almost mock'd belief.
Oft round his daily path hung eager crowds
Bearing the helpless sick—all, all, were heal'd,
And many a widow'd Mother bless'd the voice
That bade her only Son arise and live.

It chanc'd one eve, with duteous labour spent,
(The spirit fail'd not, tho' the flesh was weak,)
He lean'd against a rock, whose lofty site
Gave to the wand'ring eye a wide extent
Of land and flood. Stern Winter's reign was o'er,—
A calm was on the deep, and gentler gales
Summon'd the loit'ring bark to bear him hence
To distant shores, or ling'ring bonds or death
His certain doom. But nought could shake that faith
That look'd beyond the grave. Man could not kill
The immortal part. The Spirit would be free,
And soar triumphant to its blest reward.
Sudden, loud voices o'er his musing broke ;
Around him throng'd, as was their ev'ning wont,
The young, the old, to drink his gracious words
That dropp'd like healing manna on their souls.
He was no Stranger now,—his patient worth
Long had they felt, and as a Father lov'd.

Yet o'er that love oft crept a thrilling awe,
As from the view of Nature's works, he led
Their thoughts to Nature's God. They deem'd him
first

Some wild Enthusiast—so strange, so new
His simple lore, that taught one God alone
Felt thro' all space, (not like their idol gods,
All made with hands,) that ask'd no shrine, save one,
The human heart. They could not doubt his faith,
Himself the example of the truths he taught.
Of those that throng'd in silent rev'rence round,
Were some, who ow'd him life, and grateful own'd
The mighty debt. O, which of all their gods
Could grant his worshippers the pow'r to stay
The shaft of death? yet he, the Christian's God,
Had on his pray'r the wondrous boon bestow'd.

He spoke—and ne'er did theme of richer grace
Or deeper int'rest thrill the spell-bound ear.
The things of Earth, as swept the inspiring strain,
Seem'd worthless dust. Redeeming love was still
His glorious theme, pouring the beam of day
O'er Man's benighted soul, where all was doubt
And pale despair. Like statues fix'd they stood,
List'ning the impassion'd Saint. Their kindling looks
Oerjoy'd he mark'd, and, "O, descend," he cried,
"Descend, blest Spirit, that the seed now sown
May yield eternal life ! And ye, my friends,
Deem it no idle vaunt, Earth, Sea, and Sky
Shall pass away, but not one jot shall fail
Of Christ's enduring Word. 'Tis on that rock
I build my hopes, 'gainst which the pow'rs of Hell
Shall nought avail. But see, the expected bark
Now quits the port ; we part to meet no more."
They wept, they cried aloud. "O, yet remain,

And be our Father still. Speak but the word,
And thou art free. O! why a Pris'ner thus?
Invoke thy God, the pow'rs of Heaven are thine."
"Tempt me no more; the cup, my Saviour drank,
Shall I refuse? 'tis not on earth I claim
My crown of recompense—it waits me there;
When shall I die, my God, and be with thee?"

Silent and sad they watch'd his parting sail,
Then turn'd to meditate the wondrous past.

Such was the infant gleam of that blest Faith
Whose mighty blaze now fills a dazzled world.

MINOR POEMS.

THE DECISION.

COULD riches recall the lost roses of Health

Ere Youth's brow of pearl felt the finger of Care,

Arrest creeping Age in its silent career,

Or with Hope's sunny smile light the cheek of De-
spair ;

Each climate, each ocean, should witness my toil,

And I, mighty Plutus ! thy vot'ry would be ;

I would shut my cold heart to pale Misery's pray'r,

And its thoughts and its dreams should be wholly of
thee.

Vain hope! round the shrine which thy Worshippers
crowd,

As I mark the deep struggle, the passions' fierce play,
My heart sighing feels, not with thee is its home,
And wanders to scenes and to hills far away.

When Man from his Maker came godlike and free,
How few were his wants, and a World of delight
Display'd all its charms the fair Stranger to greet,
Now courting his taste, now enchanting his sight.

Yes, then He was blest. No fount was more pure
Than the thoughts or the wishes that hallow'd the day,
Till the whispers of Pride dimm'd the smile of Content,
And the pray'r of thanksgiving to murmurs gave way.

Where now the false Rebel? his freedom is flown,
For the slave to his wants is indeed a poor slave,

And, lost in the whirl of this world's giddy strife,
Ne'er stops to reflect, till appall'd by the grave.

His bright heaps of gold, can they profit him now !
Or lull the wild fever that knows not to spare !
'Tis past—all is vain to redeem the lost hours,
And his eye speaks a language of silent despair.

Then why should I court, while I've power to reject,
A lot which, tho' splendid, no bliss can bestow,
And, reckless of hopes with Eternity link'd,
Exchange my proud birthright for day-dreams below !

Well pray'd the Inspir'd, "Grant enough, but not more—
Lest, in fullness of pride, thee, my God ! I deny.
Nor doom me to want, lest it tempt me to steal,
And I madly assail thee with blasphemous cry."

These oracular truths bear a stamp so divine

That deep, and yet deeper, they sink in my heart ;

To my own humble vale unreluctant, I turn,

Where Content's hallow'd smiles their sweet sunlight
impart.

All hail, ye lov'd bow'rs of domestic repose !

Like a pilgrim, long exil'd, your haunts I regain.

Here the World's far-off roar to a whisper subsides,

And its shaft of temptation assails me in vain.

THE FALSE ONE.

I WISH my throbbing brain could fly
Remembrance of the days gone by :
I wish oblivious dews would steep
My senses in one lengthen'd sleep.
I startle at my wasting cheek—
I sometimes think my heart will break.
False Caroline ! by thee betray'd,
Behold the ruin thou hast made !

E'en now before my aching eyes
The Visions of the past arise.
Again in all its witch'ry drest,
Thy faultless Image stands confest.

I drink the magic of thine eye,
I catch thy sympathetic sigh ;
Still linger on thy plighted word
Repeated, and again implor'd.

Speak ye my bliss, my native bow'rs,
How rapture wing'd the passing hours !
I told each flow'r, each fav'rite grove,
My story of successful love.
Soon will your shades new charms assume,
Your scenes with sweeter graces bloom ;
Soon will my hermit wand'rings cease,
And all be joy and wedded peace.

Cease, Mem'ry, cease ; my burning brain
Can scarce the with'ring change sustain.
Would that my heart were callous grown—
All its warm feelings chill'd to stone !

I never, never can forget
The cold, the stranger look I met,
When on the buoyant wings of love
I flew, her plighted faith to prove.

Ah, could that mind, more priz'd than gold,
Enshrine one thought of sordid mould?
I deem'd that Truth, which scorn'd disguise,
Was mirror'd in those gentle eyes.
What tho' my Rival's wealthier store
All India at thy feet should pour,
This jewell'd pomp can ne'er impart
The unbought raptures of the heart.

FONTENELLE.

As Fontenelle with Madame B——

In sportive chat amus'd the hour ;

One moment dazzled by her wit,

The next, a slave to Beauty's pow'r—

“O cease,” he cried, “enchanting belle !

Nor quite o'erpow'r thy Fontenelle.”

The playful Widow laugh'd, and said,

“ Well, less enchanting I will be,

If thou, poor Suppliant, wilt declare

The diff'rence 'twixt this watch and me.

Exert thy ready wit, and tell,

Or be no more my Fontenelle.”

“ Ah !” sigh’d the flatt’rer, “ can I fail,

When thus by all thy charms beset ?

Those hours, this watch doth bid us note,

You sweetly force us to forget.”

“ Thy wit,” she cried, “ I love so well,

Thou still must be my Fontenelle.”

THE PROSPECT.

ON this proud breezy summit as listless I lie,
I seem wean'd from the earth, more akin to the sky ;
I breathe the pure fields of ethereal blue,
And my frame is so buoyant, my rapture so new,
I feel like those Spirits, that still love to cast
One look on the scenes of their pilgrimage past.

How fair is yon World ! like a mirror display'd,
Here lit by the sunlight, there soften'd by shade.
When summon'd to part from an Eden like this
Thrice hallow'd by home, and affection's first kiss,
What heart could some natural throbbings forbear !
One tear would disgrace not Eternity's heir.

'Tis the silence of Sabbath that sleeps on the air,
As if a whole world were rapt deeply in pray'r :
No sound meets the ear, save the murmur that throws
A charm over stillness, a depth o'er repose ;
'Tis the bell's silver chime, the herd's answering low,
And the Cuckoo's lone note, that swell faint from below.

I've drunk in wild wonder the rich strains of Art,
But these are the tones that strike full on the heart.
I've hung o'er the gems of Italia's coast,
But this wide flood of splendour what canvas can boast?
I've knelt in yon dome, but more fervent the glow
In the World's living temple my bosom feels now.

Let the slave of Ambition these feelings disdain !
Tho' there's scorn on his lip, yet his heart cannot feign.
The crowd is his Heav'n. He dare not be free,
And drink, mighty Truth ! at thy fountain like me.

What guest from this glorious banquet can rise,
Nor bend to that Pow'r which so amply supplies?

Once the War-blast rang fierce thro' these bow'rs of
repose,

When the crest of each foeman was crown'd with the
Rose,—

It was not to crush the Invader's proud might,
That, England! thy Chivalry rush'd to the fight.
It was not his blood that blush'd deep on thy blade;
'Twas the blood of thy Sons 'gainst each other array'd.

But these blots on thy scutcheon, like spots in the sun,
Are lost in the splendour of triumphs since won:
When o'er Europe the storm of wild tyranny pass'd,
Her Kingdoms o'erthrown, and her altars laid waste,
Thy Warriors rush'd fearless the fallen to save,
And a far-distant isle shrines the Despot's lone grave.

As spread the proud tidings o'er city and vale,
There were hearts that wax'd cold, there were cheeks
that grew pale.

Tho' rich was the mem'ry that hallow'd the dead,
Tho' for all we hold sacred, their life-blood was shed,
Yet many a love-dream to wretchedness woke,
As the withering tale, like a thunder clap, broke.

See, near you white porch where the lone Widow sits—
She feels the bright sun-shine, and carols by fits—
Her sweet soldier-boy swell'd the list of the slain ;
'Twas her last link to earth, and a blight smote her brain.
She smiles as the Sun-beam plays warm o'er her brow,
“'Tis Summer, 'tis Summer, why comes he not now?”

The war-drum is hush'd, and how soothingly sweet
Are the sounds in its stead, Echo loves to repeat !

As the Sun higher rides, more delicious the hues
That their fugitive tints o'er the landscape diffuse :
Yes, Peace seems to claim this bright world as her own,
And to Man, its blest tenant, no cares can be known.

'Tis the day-dream of Fancy. Let Truth draw the veil,
At the dread scenes beyond e'en the stoutest would
quail.

Man's birthright is sorrow, his bloom is but brief,
Yet he plays such strange tricks as fill Angels with grief.
All around him breathes death—still the warning is
vain ;—

Proud fool ! scarce a world his vast plans can contain.

From Affection's mild pleadings, from Home's sunny
skies,

In chase of some Phantom, the Maniac flies.

If wealth be his idol, he shudders to feel
There are wounds on his Conscience no treasures can
 heal ;

Till with years, disappointment, and sickness opprest,
He creeps to that home, as his Polestar of rest.

His home ! 'twas the spectre of that he once knew !
They were Strangers that question'd, then coldly with-
 drew.

His last hope was wither'd—his heart chill'd to stone—
'Twas now in the wide world he stood all alone.
“ My Mother ! ” She heard not his desolate cry—
In blessing her Truant, she breath'd her last sigh.

Such is Life's awful picture, yet heeded by few,
Tho' in characters fearful it glare on the view.

The bliss we can grasp at, is proudly disdain'd,
'Tis ever in prospect, but never attain'd.
We speed the blind chase, till, our wanderings past,
Too late in our bosoms we find it at last.

OSSIANIC FRAGMENTS.

ALONG the silent heath

The moss-grown pillars mark the bed of death.

Here sleep the Mighty. O'er their lonely graves

The long grass whistles and the night-storm raves.

The Stranger lingers o'er the half-hid stone,

Clears the rank moss, and ponders Ages gone.

Night's misty mantle veils the Warrior's bed ;

Beneath the dripping wing, its glossy head

The heath-fowl hides ; 'midst mantling fern reclin'd

Couches the hart beside the milk-white hind ;

Amid their dogs the plaided Hunters lie,
The heath their bed, their canopy the sky.
When Day's bright Lord exulting leaps to sight,
Again the Hunter starts from slumbers light,
Shakes from his spangled vest the tears of morn,
Cheers his lov'd dogs, and wakes the silvery horn.
Fair smiles the dawn. It cannot pierce the gloom
That shrouds the tenants of the oblivious tomb.
Then why, lorn Trembler ! do the winds of night
Lift thy dark locks and rend thy robes of white ?
Is it the snowy hind, that, dimly seen,
Round the grey pillars crops the herbs of green ?
Daughter of woe ! thy vain regrets are past,
'Tis now thou shar'st thy Lover's bed at last.

Here round the burning oak, whose pillar'd blaze
Glar'd o'er the heath, the Chiefs of other days

Oft spread the feast of night ; and as the flame
Gleam'd o'er the stones of death, the mighty fame
Of those who slept, rous'd the grey Sons of song ;
While from their shrouds of mist, a gloomy throng,
The thin pale Ghosts, with mournful transport bend
To hear the music of their deeds ascend.

O, blest is he, that falls on Glory's bed
In Manhood's prime, while round his laurell'd head
His honours bloom luxuriant, ere the hand
Wax faint and fainter, and the pond'rous brand
Deceive the enfeebled grasp—ere taunts succeed
Where erst applauses crown'd the godlike deed.
No tombs of friends demand his frequent sighs,
Till Strangers tend his own sad obsequies.
For him, on deathless harps, the Sons of song
Roll the rich tide of melody along.

The Youths of promise kindle as they hear,
And soft-ey'd Beauty pours the tender tear.

“O Warriors!” sigh'd the King, with falt'ring tongue,
As o'er his parting words they breathless hung,
“The staff, the comfort of my feeble years,
To you I trust. Amid the shock of spears
Shield the young beam. Let not its rosy light,
So rich with promise, sink in early night!
Restore him to my arms.”

THE FATHER TO HIS CHILD.

DUTY OF PRAYER.

ATTEND, my Son, my anxious care !
And listen to thy Father's pray'r.
As yet thy little hands are clean,
And hope illumines the future scene :
But soon Youth's fairy visions fly,
And cares will prompt the frequent sigh ;
Let then, my Son, while years are young.
The praise of God employ thy tongue.

Ere thou thy nightly pillow press,
Thy God, with bended knee, address.

When morning beams salute thy view,
To Him thy early vows renew ;
For know, my Boy, when sorrows flow,—
And Sorrow is our lot below,—
All human aid will useless prove
Without thy Heavenly Father's love.

DUTY TO PARENTS.

WOULD'ST thou, my Son, have peace thy guest,
And with increase of years be blest,
Honour thy Parents, and this law
Observe with reverential awe.
Not all the stars, with splendour bright
That twinkle on the brow of night,
The soul with equal rapture move
As the fond glow of duteous love.

Ah ! can thy warmest zeal repay
Thy Mother's cares by night and day ?
When sickness pal'd thy rosy cheek,
Who can thy Mother's anguish speak ?
She sooth'd thy pains, she watch'd thy bed
Till Health returning lustre shed.
Wilt thou, wherever thou shalt be,
Forget thy Mother's cares for thee ?

While thus thy Mother's love I tell,
I see thy little bosom swell ;
The glowing cheek, the moisten'd eye,
Anticipate thy sweet reply.
“ Bless her, kind Heav'n ! ” they seem to say,
“ Let me this wondrous love repay.
Let me, with zeal that ne'er shall tire,
Be all my Parents can desire.”

THE CRUCIFIXION.

BEHOLD, my Child, depicted here
A scene to wake the incessant tear.
Stretch'd on the cross, thy Saviour lies ;
His Murd'ers mock his dying sighs.
See, amid taunts that rend the sky,
He bows his head in agony !
Their vengeance knew not how to spare ;
Forgiveness was his latest pray'r.

Well may'st thou shudder at the tale ;
Well may thy guileless cheek grow pale.
For Man, for sinful Man he dies,
A voluntary sacrifice.
Before Almighty wrath he stood,
And seal'd our pardon with his blood.
Yes, 'twas for thee, for all, he gave
Himself, our ransom, to the grave.

The grave could hold him not. Once more,
Triumphant o'er its prostrate pow'r,
He rose ; and from his throne on high
Still bends on earth his pitying eye,
Pours balm into the contrite breast,
And gives the o'erladen Spirit rest.
That rest no Child of Sin can share,
For nought impure must enter there.

Heed then, my Boy, the warning giv'n,
And build thy ev'ry hope on Heav'n.
Whate'er thy thought, thy word, thy will,
The eye of God is on thee still.
Let not thy heart rebellious prove,
Nor rashly slight a Saviour's love ;
His love all earthly love transcends,
'Tis link'd with life, that never ends.

THE DYING EMPEROR ADRIAN'S
ADDRESS TO HIS SOUL.

POOR Spirit ! ever on the wing,
Thou soothing, anxious, restless thing,
Fond tenant of this mortal clay
That long hast cheer'd its lonely way,
What regions strange, unknown before,
Poor Spirit ! wilt thou now explore ?
Alas ! soon naked, shiv'ring, pale,
Thy wonted pow'rs at once shall fail ;
Thy playful fancy shall be o'er,
And all thy jests be heard no more.

EVENING.

AMANDA, come ! our fav'rite bow'r invites :

Now Eve, with bashful step, steals slow along ;
The enamell'd turf a richer fragrance breathes ;
The awaken'd woodlands pour a sweeter song.

Yes, Man himself a kindred feeling owns ;

His thoughts soar upward on more vig'rous wing.
'Tis the calm hour when Meditation loves
To quench her thirst at Truth's eternal spring.

Emblem of life art thou, revolving Day !

When from the glimm'ring East thou leap'st to sight,
In thy bright course Youth's buoyant morn we read,
Profuse of hopes, and radiant with delight.

When round thy throne meridian splendors break,

Like thine how fair, how brief, Man's boasted prime!

From his proud height, like thee, he slowly sinks,

Engulf'd, forgotten, in the stream of Time.

How oft thy sunny brow is dark with storms

That rend, with sudden sweep, the summer bow'r!

Life's bud of promise thus with joy we greet,

Yet mourn, with bleeding hearts, the blighted flow'r.

E'en now what glories crown thy parting look!

What gorgeous splendors light the western wave!

O! may life's closing scene thus sweetly smile,

Still brighter, brighter, as we reach the grave.

The grave—dread thought! Corruption's silent home!

Where Man, associate with the worm alone,

Must make his final bed, and part with all

Too fondly lov'd, too fondly deem'd his own.

Away, away with such disheart'ning fears !

O ! 'tis a blessed privilege to die ;—

Then, its frail prison rent, exulting, free,

The Spirit springs to claim its kindred sky.

'Tis the inherent dread which clings to guilt,

That crowds, with hideous shapes, death's silent vale.

Man dares the worst, in chase of wealth or fame—

When Heav'n's the prize, his coward cheek turns pale.

Awake, lost wretch ! while yet the pow'r be thine—

Awake—this hour—the next may sound thy knell.

E'en from the tomb ascends a warning voice.

Hark, to the death-note of yon sullen bell !

Where crowns the humble church yon verdant slope,

Slow moves the train amid the village dead :

The snowy plumes bespeak a Virgin bier,

And ne'er were tears of purer sorrow shed.

'Tis Ella's funeral hour—and mournful crowds

Attend—'tis all they can—life's closing rite.

The Aged muse, her lov'd Companions weep,

And Childhood stills its gambols at the sight.

But round that hearth, where late her virtues beam'd,

Now dark and lone, what recollections throng!

As yet the mighty blow defies relief,

And consolation dies on Pity's tongue.

There is a time when Friendship's hallow'd voice

May cheat the weary bosom to repose ;

There is a time when all its pow'rs are vain,

When nought but Heav'n the bleeding wound can close.

Yes, Flattery's honey'd voice may lull our fears—

The World may smile while all around is bright ;—

But where the honey'd voice, the venal smile,

When thronging sorrows come, and all is night ?

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